For other available attributes or how to express more complicated dates in ISO 8601, please see Appendix F.

Encoding Granularity and Content Tagging

The "granularity of encoding" in a finding aid refers to the amount of effort expended in the application of subject terms, linking, and other elements which, while not necessary for a complete and valid EAD document, may be applied to enhance searchability.

Thorough tagging of content within container lists is an important but time-consuming and expensive endeavor. The benefits of tagging to this level of granularity are unclear. NCEAD recommends tagging each applicable content term that does not occur in the high-level <controlaccess> section once. Each tagged term should be considered integral to understanding the breadth and context of the collection. At a minimum, content tagging MUST be used in the high-level <controlaccess>. In addition, inclusion of *encodinganalog* and *source* attributes is also recommended for high-level <controlaccess>. These attributes are demonstrated in the encoding guidelines below. These elements include:

- <persname>
- <geogname>
- <corpname>
- <famname>
- <subject>
- <genreform>
- <occupation>
- <title>
- <name>

In addition to the use of these content tags in the <controlaccess> section of the EAD instance, NCEAD recommends that the archdesc-level <scopecontent> include detailed content tagging. If an institution includes content tagging in this high-level element, such tagging should be done consistently for all encoded finding aids from the institution. Content tagging at subcomponent-level <scopecontent> elements can also be considered if that tagging will yield content access not available in the archdesc-level <scopecontent>.

The goal of content tagging is to assist future searching and indexing of finding aids. It is foreseeable that a search protocol would rank a finding aid higher or more relevant if a content term were tagged on multiple occasions within a finding aid. Therefore we must be careful to not overstate the significance of any particular finding aid by using content tags throughout every section of the finding aid. If content tagging is employed consistently for all finding aids, fewer inappropriate leads will be encountered by researchers.

Guidelines for content tagging include:

- Tag only those terms that have significance for the collection.